



**In the middle years of the eighteenth century, English writers discovered the landscape, not only as genre of painting, made popular by the art of Claude Lorrain, Nicolas Poussin and Salvator Rosa, but also as a place to be visited and viewed as if it were a picture. No part of England was more discovered in this period than the Lake District, which was transformed over the course of the next century from a remote region of farmland and inaccessible hills into a wild and romantic landscape of picturesque lake and mountain. Wordsworth is known both as the principle 'lake poet' and as the author of its most important nineteenth century guidebook. But Wordsworth had several predecessors, notably Thomas West, whose 1778 A guide to the Lakes, was the first comprehensive guide to the area. Influenced by contemporary thinking on the picturesque, West acknowledged his own predecessors, especially Thomas Gray, Arthur Young and Thomas Pennant and commented, sometimes critically, on their choice of viewpoints. Extracts from Gray's journal were included as addenda to the second edition of West's guide in 1902, alongside several minor pieces. This collection includes most of the significant work on the Lakes prior to West's guide**

**Read by Phil Benson. Total running time: 2:13:50**

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